



THE RIGHT(S) WORDS

FOREWORD

Gender equality is a core value of the EU, recognised in the Treaties and the Charter of Fundamental Rights. This publication is one of the outcomes of the project Right Words (2022/2023), that was funded by Erasmus+: KA210-ADU – Small-scale partnerships in adult education.

The project Right (s) words aims to concretely contribute and, through training and awareness raising actions, to break down some gender stereotypes that in fact compromise real equality between men and women in the working and social context. The intervention focuses on language and on the reconstruction, from a linguistic, legal and social point of view, of the meaning of some keywords used, today improperly, to describe the female world.

The project has built a first, and replicable, concrete experience of cross-border collaboration (Italy – Slovenia) on the issue of gender equality and non-discrimination of women, starting from a common rewriting of the meaning of the carefully selected words that describe the female world, bringing with it not only concepts, but real situations and feelings and thus to trigger a cultural and transversal awareness on the issue.

This publication is based on information obtained by participants from Slovenia and Italy, who participated in carefully guided focus groups. The project partners identified 4 main areas that were discussed: communication, work-life balance, negotiation and health.

We would like to thank all the participants that contributed to the focus groups organised in Slovenia and Italy, for their sincere opinion sharing which helps to deepen the field of gender equality.

This publication gathers definitions, participant's opinions and advices, tips/guidelines for companies and women, present theories and practices, on how to advance towards more gender inclusive workplaces. It was written by Diversity Charter Slovenia in collaboration with partners from Italy and Slovenia.

*Right Words partnership wants to state, that this publication has limitations because sex and gender are considered in binary terms and there was no discussion of intersexuality, non-binary, transgender, or any others on the gender spectrum.



Contribution of the participants in focus groups have been collected in podcasts that are available [here](#).

This publication has been produced with the financial support of the Erasmus+: KA210-ADU – Small-scale partnerships in adult education.

The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the partnership of the project Right Words and of the contributors of the focus groups, and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.

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ABOUT THE RIGHT(S) WORDS

The project The right words responds in a positive and concrete manner to the priority theme of equal opportunities and inclusion. The strategic objective is to overcome the barriers related to gender discrimination in order to reconstruct and restore, through an innovative, collective and multidisciplinary approach, the profound sense of a truly inclusive human community.

To give shape to the identified objective, it becomes a priority, a necessity and a must to intervene on language. Everything, in fact, acquires meaning through the words, the individual words, that one chooses to describe and narrate everything, including the sphere related to the world of women.

Using words consistently and correctly becomes the first step on the path of the cultural change needed to break down all the stereotypes that, in fact, limit women's opportunities, in every sphere, from the social to the professional.

Friuli Venezia Giulia and Slovenia tell their stories in this project in which words become the protagonists to show how gender issues characterise social and cultural contexts in different ways. An opportunity for knowledge, exchange and growth that testifies how the theme of gender equality and equal opportunities knows no boundaries and becomes a priority for the construction of life contexts.

4 words for each of the 4 investigated areas:

- Communication
- Work-life balance
- Negotiation
- Health

A total of 16 words that form the basis for a new vocabulary in which to recognise oneself in order to be an active part of a cultural change that can no longer be postponed.

PARTNERS



Erasmus+



Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori
Unione Sindacale Regione FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA

<https://www.cislfvg.it/>



UNIVERSITY
OF TRIESTE

<https://www.units.it/>



<https://www.facebook.com/dirittiaprescindere/>



SCHOOL OF ADVANCED SOCIAL STUDIES

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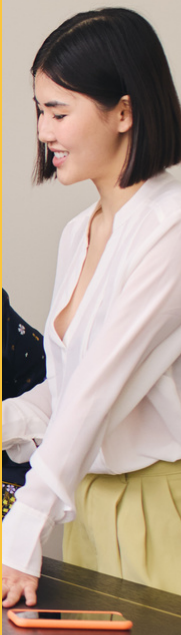


LISTINA
RAZNOLIKOSTI
SLOVENIJA

<https://www.raznolikost.eu/>

COMMUNICATION

- HARASSMENT
- CONSENT
- RESPECT
- THE STEREOTYPE OF A
SUCCESSFUL WOMAN



ASSOCIATIONS

HARASSMENT

self-confidence, assertiveness, misogyny, sexism, chauvinism, discomfort, power, reaction, boundary, disrespect, opinions, rules within an organization, anger, rebellion, remarks about clothing or appearance, with words, sexual, talk about sex, distress, prohibited action, strongly condemn, disrespect, power, exploitation, coercion, disregard of boundaries, something overlooked on purpose, zero tolerance, invasion of personal space, mobbing, pressure, insult

CONSENT

self-esteem, excitement, cooperation, sexual harassment, straightforward question and explicit yes, agreement, compromise, decision, responsibility, respecting boundaries, only yes means yes, clear no does not mean yes, to intercourse, consideration of values, boundaries, if a woman expresses disagreement, she is not respected the same, for women it is often ignored, agreement, I agree even if I disagree, compromise, agreement, the possibility of choice, arbitrariness, yielding, submission

RESPECT

integrity, self-evident, leadership, example, natural, mutual, basis, the foundation of equality, respect for each individual, equal treatment, inclusive language, respect for etiquette, conversation, listening, consideration, listening, knowledge, trust, attempts to invade privacy, a vanishing value

THE STEREOTYPE OF A SUCCESSFUL WOMAN

successful woman and care for family, misunderstanding of surroundings, underestimation, bullying, calculation, organisation, control of emotions, workaholic, tact, determination, good looks, successful in all areas; career, family, appearance, "manly" what about family, the husband is a shoemaker, who supports her, wife, mother successful in her career, always available

HARASSMENT

'undesirable conduct not related to a person's sexuality'

DEFINITION

Gender-based violence stems from an unequal balance of power and responsibilities in relationships between men and women and is linked to patriarchy and persisting gender-based discrimination. Sexual harassment is defined in Directive 2002/73/EC as 'where any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature occurs, with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person, in particular when creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment'.

WOMEN'S STATEMENTS – SUMMARY

'Harassment is unwanted behaviour that can disturb a person's status'.

Harassment can be verbal or non-verbal; most frequently they relate to an individual's sexual sphere, and concern something that is perceived as 'different' from 'normal'.

Harassment and respect are two words that travel in parallel: 'harassment means not having respect'.

'It is gratuitous and unjustified violence, which creates embarrassment, guilt and anxiety. It is often associated with a lack or diversity of culture. Moreover, for many it implies entering a person's intimate space without permission'.

'The word harassment is closely related to the words pain and suffering. Harassment in women often triggers a strong sense of guilt.'

PRESENT THEORIES AND PRACTICES

The following facts are derived from acknowledged studies and research on harassment (list of literature):

- Some sectors and occupations have a higher exposure to violence, particularly healthcare, public emergency services, politics, education, transport, domestic work, agriculture and the rural economy, as well as the textiles, clothing, leather and footwear sectors.
- Some groups of workers can be more affected by bullying and violence in the workplace, especially pregnant women and parents, women with disabilities, migrant women, indigenous women, LGBTI people and women working part-time, as trainees or on temporary contracts.
- There is the coexistence of bullying, sexual harassment and harassment on grounds of pregnancy and motherhood with various forms of unpaid work in the formal and informal economies (such as subsistence agriculture, food preparation, care for children and the elderly) and a range of work experience schemes (such as apprenticeships, internships and voluntary work).
- Undesirable behaviour may stem simultaneously from different sources or relate simultaneously to professional, private or social life, which has a negative effect on all the individuals, professional groups or social groups in those spheres.
- There is a serious underreporting of cases of harassment.
- Domestic violence often spills over into the workplace, with a negative impact on workers' lives and the productivity of enterprises, and that this spillover can also go in the opposite direction, from the workplace to home.

WOMEN'S ADVICE

Not too intrusive forms of harassment can be solved with humour, while at the same time clearly defining the limits of what is still acceptable communication. In addition, harasser is clearly urged not to cross the set, expressed boundaries.

Overcoming harassment is easier if we understand the starting points or reasons of the harasser.

The most effective way to overcome harassment is to ask harasser to repeat what has been said ('Can you say it one more time!') or to explain what was said ('What do you mean?' or 'Can you explain to me what you meant, because I don't understand you?'). With such questions, the charge of any harasser should be lost.

GUIDELINES AGAINST HARASSMENT

- Employer understands the barriers women face in reporting cases of sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination and violence and sets standards on violence.
- Employer implements measures: active and effective policies to prevent and combat all forms of violence against women, with legislative framework at all levels (including strong and dissuasive sanctions for perpetrators and comprehensive information with training courses to ensure that employees understand policies and procedures), establishes mechanisms that empower and support women in the safe reporting of cases of abuse and offers full support and encouragement to women in reporting cases of sexual harassment, gender-based discrimination, harassment on grounds of pregnancy and motherhood and bullying, among others, without fear of possible consequences.
- employer organises mandatory training on sexual harassment and bullying for all employees and those in management roles. Trainings are interactive, continuous, tailored to the particular workplace and given by external experts.
- Employer practices ZERO TOLERANCE approach to sexual harassment and policies conducive to it.



CONSENT

'explicit and implicit expression of consent/ denial of implicit or explicit behaviour or action by another person'

DEFINITION

Consent is an explicit or implicit manifestation of approval or denial, towards another individual's behaviour or action, which may also be expressed blatantly or tacitly.

CONSENT IN PRACTICE

Consent may be understood differently depending on the situation: in some cases, consent makes us feel understood and appreciated for our ideas, actions and attitudes; in other cases, however, it may be synonymous with a weakness or even result in an obligation arising from a psychological or other types of violence.

Therefore, consent can be understood as both, positive and negative with respect to the person. In fact, on the one hand it proves to be a factor that allows us to be self-confident and appear as society wants us according to the imposed standards; on the other hand, it can also be understood as a factor that is indispensable to achieve and can lead people to perform actions that can harm themselves.

CONSENT & GENDER EQUALITY

The consent, in reference to women, very often takes on a negative meaning, becoming synonymous with weakness and acceptance. Society itself generally does not allow rejection, bringing women, in particular, into a status where they cannot say no.

In practice, woman who says "no" is treated differently than a man. Such a woman is often accused of being »hysterical«, and she will change her mind. On the other hand, men find it more difficult to accept a woman's "no". It is argued that this is due to patriarchy and societal gender relations. In the past, a woman was treated as a property, a brother, a father, and a husband, which is still entrenched by some degree.

RESPECT

'adequacy of the language (in particular media and social media) in relation to the with each individual's private life'

DEFINITION

By respect we mean the appropriate and adequate use of language, particularly used on communication channels such as the media and social media, in relation to the personal sphere of each individual.

RESPECT IN PRACTICE

'Respect must be considered the basis of social living', 'it is the first rule in interpersonal relations'. Moreover, it is closely linked to the personal willingness to receive it: 'if I want to be respected, I must also show respect to others'.

Respect is the basis of communication: without it, we would not be able to develop a constructive dialogue. If it is reciprocal, it makes it possible to create a civilised relationship between people, who may not know each other and therefore be unaware of the weaknesses of their interlocutor.

RESPECT & GENDER EQUALITY

Respect is often lacking for women, who seek understanding, kindness, gentleness and attention, but are often faced with prejudice, discrimination and exclusion.

Respect requires understanding on the part of the interlocutor with whom one is dealing, but in this, respect it is also necessary to give importance to the value of the other.

WOMEN'S STATEMENTS - SUMMARY

'Kindness, seriousness and the love we show towards others are fundamental.'

'Respect is something that a person has or gives to another person, despite not agreeing and despite differences in attitudes and beliefs.'

'Respect means that a person accepts other's opinion while clearly expressing that he disagrees with it and does not lead to an argument due to a disagreement in opinions.'

EXAMPLE

Lady's modus operandi.

A woman participating in an event represents a company where she is employed as the head of the Human Resources Management Department and feels very uncomfortable among the men themselves. A man walks up to her and praises her outfit. She responds by giving him the same compliments. After a moment of surprise, the conversation continues on a professional level. She feels that the conversation would be different if she would react differently.

EXAMPLE

Don't believe everything they write!

Reporting on private life, some journalists allow themselves to be disrespectful. Results of such reporting using manipulation are damaging for the person's reputation. There is a prevailing experience that, as a society, we are prone to connect in hate and negative, rather than to love and positive. Thus, negative reporting is something that can be used for manipulation of public opinion too.



THE STEREOTYPE OF A SUCCESSFUL WOMAN

'woman following a typical male approach and way of thinking'

DEFINITION

By the stereotype of the successful woman, we mean a female figure who emulates attitudes and ways of thinking that are purely attributable to the male sphere.

STEREOTYPE OF SUCCESSFUL WOMEN & GENDER EQUALITY

The stereotype of the successful woman often leads to judgement based on physical appearance and not on the real qualities a woman may have. One of the most common associations is in fact successful woman - beautiful woman and successful women – ideal women. The career woman: 'ignores the family', 'is of easy virtue' and 'has balls'.

The expression 'stereotype of the successful woman' is often attributed, also erroneously through the media, to a woman who, by means of her beauty and body, has managed to achieve a certain position in the workplace. She has thus obtained a role, not through her abilities, but through the exploitation of certain characteristics that distinguish her as a woman.

EXAMPLE

Different professions - different expectations from mothers.

Public female figures are constantly questioned about their motherhood: 'How can you find time for your family and work? Is it hard for your husband? ...'

In less publicly exposed professions, such as cleaners, medical doctors, factory workers, etc., no one questions the quality of motherhood, even in cases where a person performs several jobs and is absent from home.

EXAMPLE

Just a small adjustment for a woman board member.

A bank was looking for a new board member. They wanted also women candidates, but none applied. They suggested to a women colleague to apply for the position. She said she can't due family obligations, explaining that she cannot be out of home in the evening on the business dinners. They told her that business dinner can be modified into lunch. She assumed that she would have to follow the same practice that men have, who usually adjust family obligations to work and not vice versa, like women usually do.

PRESENT THEORIES AND PRACTICES

A study of performance reviews showed that women (66 %) compared to men (1 %), tend to perceive more negative feedback on their personal style such as 'You can sometimes be abrasive?'. Studies show that women often get feedback on their speaking style, while men do not. If women are confident and assertive, they can be criticised for speaking too loudly or often. But if they are quieter, they are more likely to be told they need to speak more confidently and assertively.

WOMEN'S STATEMENTS - SUMMARY

Business women, or in important roles, should not necessarily be associated with the concept of commodification of the female body. Rather, one should recognise the determination of women, their willingness to engage in the world of work to achieve their own independence.

In this sense, a cultural change is needed that sees the successful woman in all her dynamism and flexibility. It is essential to talk and confront each other.

GUIDELINES TO OVERCOME GENDER BIAS IN SELECTION PROCESS FOR LEADING POSITIONS

In order to overcome gender bias in selection process for leading position, firstly, you need to raise awareness about gender biases in the workplace. Secondly, you should structure unbiased succession process in your company. How?

- Those selecting leaders must be aware how bias impacts decision making.
- Understand what your company needs for the future to be more sustainable.
- Articulate the ideal leader's qualities and attributes to achieve what you want for your company.
- All the candidates must be objectively assessed.
- Search for women candidates, motivate them to apply for the leadership position and answer to their questions.

RECONCILIATION OF WORK AND PRIVATE LIFE

- TIME MANAGEMENT
- REMOTE WORK
- FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE
- DIVISION OF ROLES, TASKS
AND RESPONSIBILITIES



ASSOCIATIONS

TIME MANAGEMENT

efficient, procrastination, time-tabled, spontaneous, valuable, finite, organized, leisure, busy, balanced

REMOTE WORK

coordination, multitasking, household chores, epidemic, women's overwork, organization, trust, responsibility, respect, freedom, time, isolation, exhausting, working conditions at home, self-discipline, more flexibility, freedom

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE

more flexibility in leisure (possibly also during work), reconciliation, agreement, demarcation of work and private life, freedom, self-discipline, parenting, easier reconciliation of private and professional life, more freedom, necessity, better results, greater satisfaction, organisation, freedom, responsibility, trust, respect

DIVISION OF ROLES, TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

trust, self-confidence, determination, equality, organization, relief, participation, the trap, a woman works more, a woman has to prove herself, weighing facts, reconciliation, women, double employment or just a home, household chores between partners + caring for children, stereotypes

TIME MANAGEMENT

'ability to have a balanced and satisfactory disposal of the time devoted to the private life and work'

DEFINITION

The word time management relates to the need of structuring the day, in work and private life. It depends a lot on the person's ability for organisation, setting up smart goals, setting up good schedules and following them in a sustained way. It relates to the ability to prioritise, but also with knowing oneself and how we respect the time of others. Good time management brings more freedom to the individual. Not doing so, people feel more stress at work and at home.

TIME MANAGEMENT IN PRACTICE

Time management is key to a good work-life balance. It brings better feelings, greater satisfaction. By managing your time well, a person can fulfil hers/his obligations, both at home and at work. This brings a person better wellbeing. It is especially important for women, who generally have more unpaid work to do in their free time. Thus, for example, they must not extend their work time because they have to pick up a child in kindergarten or take care of an older family member. It is important that women to put self-care and their own interests into their calendars. If a woman forgets about herself and her needs, this can affect her well-being, opportunities and poorer mental health.

Lack of time affects well-being, for example life satisfaction, it affects mental health, work performance, creativity and relationship quality.

Older employees can be exposed at work as well as in private life to excessive workloads that demand good organisation of time.

Younger employees are seen as people that prioritise private life more, which older employees see as avoiding workload and work responsibility. Young also expresses that our schedules should include time for self-care. It is important to open intergenerational discussion regarding work life balance, this way we could advance also in gender equality.

TIME MANAGEMENT & GENDER EQUALITY

Women perform many hours of unpaid work. They are seen as main caregivers, they do the majority of domestic work, respectively, shouldering the heaviest burden of cooking, cleaning, and caring for children and the elderly. On the other hand, even if the female participation in the paid work grows, women continue to provide most of the unpaid care work. This inequality often leaves women with little or no time.

Lack of time has a significant impact on women's economic opportunities and health and is a manifestation of gender inequality in the society.

Restrictive gender norms limit women's access to their control over time. This makes women 'time poor', which impacts their health, as time poverty promotes self-neglect, in everyday life, it can prevent women from seeking their own medical care due not finding the time. It can prevent women from earning money, from education and can result in women's poorer food choices, less exercise and more stress. Improving women's control over their own time benefits their own health and economic opportunities, as well as their families and society in general.

WOMEN'S STATEMENTS - SUMMARY

'Being able to manage time is a challenge, both physically and emotionally', with the understanding, however, that 'Time management can lead to increased productivity' and that 'It is necessary to devote our time to the activities or people we prioritise'.



REMOTE WORK

'perception of working all the time when an individual is not working, taking into account the fact that private life and work are mixed when working remotely'

DEFINITION

Perception of work and non-work time in view of the mixing of life and work in the remote mode.

REMOTE WORK IN PRACTICE

Remote working has a double face: 'it is a product of modernity and represents a great opportunity, allowing people to reconcile their work with their commitments and family' but 'it limits their independence' and 'it is not accessible to everyone'.

Remote working can be understood as a modernisation in the field of work: it allows a person to work wherever they are and puts them in a better position to manage their private life.

It is seen as a real opportunity for certain categories of people, such as neurodifferent people, i.e. individuals who can be very intelligent but have little interpersonal skills.

REMOTE WORK & GENDER EQUALITY

Remote work is seen as an opportunity, especially for women with young children. In spite of this, it is often women themselves who do not see it as such, searching solutions in the improvement of social services, through more nurseries, care facilities and school services with more flexible hours.

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE

'organisation and the use of flexible working time, taking into account the place where the work is carried out, public and private services (schools, shops, public offices, health services, etc.)'

DEFINITION

Organisation and use of flexible working hours with reference to workplaces, public and private services (schools, shops, public offices, health services, etc.).

Flexible schedules bring more flexibility, more freedom and easier reconciliation of private and professional life. It can bring greater satisfaction and better organisation. On the other hand, it demands self-discipline, bargaining, need for the support from the managers, and demands mutual trust, respect. But flexible schedules can bring greater risk for breaking up the boundary between work and private life.

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE IN PRACTICE

Flex schedule is a work that gives to the employees freedom to fulfil their jobs at any time of the day or week, and also beyond the constraints of the traditional fixed 8 hour work schedule.

Workplace flexibility is based on the idea, that employees can be productive no matter when or where they perform their work. The idea is to change a rigid workplace environment and work schedule towards more flexibility that acknowledges individual needs and supports better work-life balance and employee well-being.

FLEXIBLE SCHEDULE & GENDER EQAULTY

The flexibility of the work schedule represents a major advantage, not only for women, but for all employees. The fact is, that people in different periods, need different support. And this is very much connected to flexible work schedules. Being limited by time poses an additional risk for exclusion of women, particularly because of their home obligations. If an employer allows a person to schedule their own work, it means that they consider the employee as a whole person, but also understanding for their needs and confidence.

Such work environment is much more friendly and less stressful. Flexibility can help every person to more work life balance.

We have to be also aware, that there are jobs which don't allow flexible work schedules. This is usually connected to employees with lower status in the company and this brings more stress and will increase inequalities.

It is important to be aware that work flexibility can be an answer for more work life balance of women, but it is not a cure-all for issues like gender pay gap, workplace discrimination and lack of for systemic women's representation in the higher – level position. Flexible schedules are important to be promoted in the workplaces as one of the possibilities, and one step towards better work life balance.

EXAMPLE

Employer demands certain hours of work per day.

Employer demands certain hours of work per day, but the most important is that employees meet the deadlines while working at their preferred hours. A company that offers also part time working, is attractive for women that are usually the first in home to take over caring responsibilities, not only for children but also for older relatives. So women, if they don't have support at home, can work despite many obligations at home. But it is important to address this topic also with sharing responsibilities at home.

PRESENT THEORIES AND PRACTICES

Research show, that job advertisements for management positions that include also information on flexible schedules, attract more women for application (Insurance company Zurich, 2019). So the topic of flexible schedules is important for women. If employers offer jobs that fit better to family, than this will open a pool of untapped talent and also help women to progress into higher paid jobs, whilst fitting other commitments than careers.

WOMEN'S STATEMENTS - SUMMARY

Italian companies, unlike the Nordic ones where flexibility is synonymous with high productivity, are still distant from the idea, believing that organisational and control problems may arise.

It can be deduced that a stronger implementation effort by companies is needed, but this requires a change in thinking on the subject in the first place.

The use of second-level bargaining is considered a useful tool to create greater flexibility.

DIVISION OF ROLES, TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

'social model that ensures a fair distribution of responsibilities and tasks in each community (family, place of work, company)'

DEFINITION

Sharing of roles, tasks and responsibilities is connected to private and work life. In society, gender roles often determine traditional responsibilities assigned to men or women at home or at work. It is about what is suitable and valuable for each sex. It is also connected to which tasks, roles are assumed to be done by women and men in partnership (such as caring for family income, performing household chores, caring for children or elderly persons, etc.). And it is also linked to which roles in the work are assumed to be done by men or women (leadership positions, education of youth, etc.).

DIVISION OF ROLES, TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN PRACTICE

Stereotypes in this field come out when a woman has a leading role in an organisation or she is publicly visible. That's when stereotypes especially come to the fore, also from society. An example is a question from journalists who ask a successful female leader how she can take care of her family and career at the same time. They don't ask men such questions. They do not ask such questions even to female doctors who work 24 hours a day.

Work-life balance is a misrepresentation of work as something outside of our lives when, in fact, it is something that should be integrated with other aspects of our lives for balanced living, therefore it is very much connected to the true equity in the division of roles, tasks and responsibilities among gender. Women don't need more tips on how to manage work and home, but rather institutional support (from public and companies) that truly understands and adopts the peculiarities of being a woman in today's society. Only this way, we could come to more equity also in the field of work life-balance.

DIVISION OF ROLES, TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES & GENDER EQUALITY

Today, society is still pushing a woman into the private realm, that is, into the realm of family, where the role of a woman as a mother and a housewife is hidden from the public eye and therefore less valued. It is a fact, that women's increase in working hours doesn't usually lead to more balanced sharing of domestic and caregiving work between women and men. Despite the increase in the number of women in the labour market and their share among employees, the sharing of responsibilities and everyday practical obligations between the sexes within the family is largely asymmetrical, with a significantly higher burden on women than men.

EXAMPLE

Men work at home as assistants.

In Slovenia, despite the tradition of recruiting women full-time and promoting gender equality, at least in the public sphere, the sharing of work in family life is still largely sexually marked. In addition, changes in parental roles are slow, men are still involved in caring for children and working at home mainly as assistants. It is true that support for a traditional division of gender roles has declined over time, though substantial support, but still remains for women having the primary caring role when children are young.

TIPS FOR BETTER WORK-LIFE BALANCE OF WOMEN

Achieving work-life balance is a journey that requires self-discovery and may require trial and error. It's about creating a fulfilling life rather than a perfectly balanced one. There is no one-size-fits-all solution for work-life balance. Each woman has to find what balance means for her unique contexts and needs.

Regaining work-life balance can be achieved through several strategies:

- Learn to say 'no' when overwhelmed;
- Schedule regular breaks for self-care and personal growth;
- Seek flexibility at work, such as remote work or flexible working hours;
- Ask for help when needed, both at home and at work;
- Connect with other women through clubs and communities.

GUIDELINES FOR BETTER WORK LIFE BALANCE

Achieving balance between one's family life and professional life is a matter of concern for both workers and employers.

- Promote a gender-neutral distribution of positions amongst employees and an organisational culture that fosters men's involvement at the household level.
- Establish a committee for better work-life balance, onboard men and women in the committee. it is advisable to include an external member on the committee.
- Undertake an audit. Once you establish committee, ask questions like: What should be changed? What should remained unchanged? What are your primary challenges in gender equality? What are the difficulties faced by women? ...
- Recommend solutions and concrete measures.
- Review and follow up after implementation.



LIST OF MEASURES FOR BETTER WORK – LIFE BALANCE (*from the Work-life Balance: An Employer's Guide, FQIS)

- Flex time: autonomous work teams, work from home (occasionally or on specific days), satellite office work (in another branch or from a shared office space), optimization of workers' commutes, job sharing (position shared by more than one employee, tasks and schedules earmarked in advance), assessing results rather than attendance.
- Leaves: maternity and paternity leaves with options to extend, parental days, adoption leaves, bereavement leaves, compassionate leaves, family-related leaves, leaves with or without pay, adding vacation days, etc.
- Organisational culture: systematically account for family responsibilities, broach the topic of WLB when dialoguing with partners, trust part-time employees and value their role within the organisation, foster effective communication between the different levels of the organisation, encourage personal and professional development (offer resources to help with self-esteem, stress management, time management, communication, etc.).
- WLB management: support workplace reintegration (gradual return to work, parental support, support to the bereaved, etc.), customised career paths, getting involved in WLB-related initiatives (workplace or neighbourhood daycares, group or cooperative purchasing, rebates on childcare-related costs, etc.), offering workshops on WLB and WLB-related topics (time management, stress management, household budget management, etc.).
- Management's level of commitment: appoint someone within the organisation as WLB coordinator, provide an organisational WLB guide or policy document outlining all WLB measures, WLB communication plan.
- Other measures: financial support or aid for child care for preschool and school-aged children, reimbursement of child care costs for overtime and weekend hours, design custom measures as you see fit.

NEGOTIATIONS

- **COMPETENCES**
- **EDUCATION**
- **PAY GAP**
- **NEGOTIATIONS IN THE AREA OF GENDER EQUALITY**



ASSOCIATIONS

COMPETENCES

show in practice what you know, negative selection, education, self-confidence, clarity, perseverance, courage, knowledge, diverse, rich, acquired, judging the competence of others-who?, competence, skills, development of a person in the workplace, recognition of competences, proof requirement earlier than for men, strength, independence, self-esteem

EDUCATION

average higher education of women, breadth, basis, abuse, self-esteem, pleasure, satisfaction, stubbornness, competence, value, interest, interest, viewability, ticket, stereotypes of individual professions, professional guidance, role of family, strength, independence

PAY GAP

still, why, inequality, helplessness, disappointment, resignation, insight into the progress of others, transparency, increasing, gender inequality, women's poverty

NEGOTIATIONS IN THE AREA OF GENDER EQUALITY

marathon, argumentation, proof, equal number of men and women in negotiations, what about other cultures, never-ending struggle

COMPETENCES

'recognition and valorisation of competences, the ability and talent of each individual different social environments'

DEFINITION

Competence is understood as the recognition and consequent enhancement of each individual's skills, aptitudes and knowledge, both in social contexts and in a specific circumstance.

COMPETENCES IN PRACTICE

Competences are considered fundamental by many and allow for autonomy and the ability to orientate oneself in a given field. To have competences means to make a pathway through which one achieves a certain level of information and awareness, in a specific field.

Competences are an excellent means of coping with negotiation and derive from training, but above all from the experience gained by a person. The more skills acquired, the more power the person will have.

It is important to emphasise that if they are an end in themselves and jealously guarded, they will not lead to improvement, which will be instead possible if they are passed on and made available to all, in a context where those who do not know ask and those who do know share.

COMPETENCES & GENDER EQUALITY

The recognition of competences from the perspective of gender equality, exists but only apparently. In fact, women do not always have the opportunity to update their knowledge, due to the limited time available.

Women still face a number of challenges in accessing and completing quality education and training, and also getting a decent employment. They are more likely to be in vulnerable employment, such as informal employment and especially unpaid family work. Household, community and care responsibilities often limit their chances of accessing education and training, or of participating in the labour force. Consequently, educational disadvantages accumulate throughout women's lives.

Occupational segregation remains a predominant feature of training and labour markets, limiting women's choices and confining them to lower-paid and lower-status jobs than men.

Competencies of women are unrecognised, also women are less likely to develop competences for the highest management positions. If a woman does not have the opportunity to develop those competencies, she will not be able to progress.

Additional challenge in not taking into account women's skills, abilities and other competencies when deciding who will get promotion. An example of such inequalities is in sectors where women dominate but male persist in leading positions (e.g. banking, insurance, education, health ...).

WOMEN'S ADVICE

Women have to learn how to negotiate with the management for more training, more educational opportunities and added schooling. This will enhance work skills, bring to women more work opportunities and better positions in the future negotiation for their career development.

Skills development offers a means of broadening occupational choices and higher shares of women in training occupations and also higher shares of female employment in those fields.

EDUCATION

'the possibility of access and participation training/education for the valorisation of competences, which allows development even in re-equilibrium of the gender equality in education and work with low representation of women, while ensuring the balanced career progression system'

DEFINITION

Training is understood as the possibility of access to and use of training and educational pathways that enhance skills and allow their development, also with a view to rebalancing gender issues in sectors of education and work with a low female presence, and to guaranteeing a balanced system of career progression.

TRAINING IN PRACTICE

To train means 'to shape each person as if he or she were a container suitable for receiving notions and knowledge useful for a given context'.

Training is synonymous with study, effort, investment of time and growth: it opens the mind to new information that can help us overcome the obstacles we will encounter.

Training should be one of the main goals before starting a career; instead, it is seen more as a waste of time and a cost that can easily be avoided.

A person with more expertise and knowledge, likely holds more power in negotiation process. On the other hand, person who has the ability to recognise and capitalise on opportunities, strives to negotiate for the future career success. This does not include only negotiation for better salary or better job position, but also for getting tools a person needs to grow and thrive in the future. This tool can include a strong support staff, but also more training, more education opportunities, added schooling, which can enhance work skills, brings to a person job title and more future work opportunities.

TRAINING & GENDER EQUALITY

Gender equality in education is the right for girls and women, boys and men to equally access, participate in, deliver and receive the benefits of education. Education brings more power in negotiation process. Men tend to achieve better economic results in negotiation than women. Such gender differences are generally small in the beginning, but if men ask for and receive, for example slightly higher starting salaries than women, and then continue to negotiate more assertively for themselves over the course of their careers, then gender pay gap is very high over time.

WOMEN'S ADVICE

In addition to initial training, it would also be advisable to keep oneself continuously up-to-date with a view to competitiveness on the labour market.

Training is perceived as a subjective right, which should mainly concern women. Women, however, are in reality often excluded from it, especially after the age of 45. In this case, the solution to be adopted is a cultural change in which training is seen more as an opportunity rather than an imposition.

Trade unions should take an increasingly central role in the training of its delegates as well.



PAY GAP

'women's right to equal pay for equal work, as received by men, especially in view of professional separation and fragmentation women's working careers'

DEFINITION

The gender pay gap is the difference in earnings between women and men. It is about what women on average take out of employment in monetary terms relative to men. It presents difference between average earnings of men and women as a percentage of average earnings of men. The pay gap is associated by the groups with the right to equal pay for men and women, with particular reference to occupational segregation and the fragmentation of women's working careers.

PAY GAP IN PRACTICE

The pay gap can become the cause of several other inequalities such as social and cultural inequality. The same jobs should be paid equally, regardless of gender or other distinctions. The pay gap is something that should be extraordinary, instead it is always present in some cases. Although there is no distinction between men and women in the contracts, the gender pay gap is often a reality, resulting from discrimination and stereotypes with respect to a certain category of people: education, studies, geographical and/or social origin are all factors that influence a person's classification. It turns out that union membership can also cause a pay gap.

PAY GAP & GENDER EQUALITY

Professions dominated by women are in comparison to professions dominated by men, lower paid. This is especially true for jobs in care work, such as childcare workers, domestic workers, and home health aids. On the other hand, also in a female dominated occupations, there is a big pay gap between earnings of women and men colleagues. A perfect example of gender pay gaps are those in sports. Pay gap impacts poverty among women at the time of retirement. It is a result of lack of transparency, and also a result of underestimation of the work done by women. Some of the reasons for the gender pay gap are structural and related to differences in employment, level of education and work experiences.

The gender pay gap does not just impact a woman once in her life. It has a compounding effect that results in a woman's reduced earning capacity over her lifetime. On average, women are less likely to progress as far as men in their career and accumulate less money for retirement.

Women are more likely to spend their lives working, and caring for the home and loved ones. They are more likely to retire in poverty.

PRESENT THEORIES AND PRACTICES

In a study in the Psychological Bulletin, Jens Mazei of the University of Münster and his colleagues analysed 51 past studies that compared women and men's negotiation results. The findings point to several concrete suggestions for women negotiators and companies, all of which their organisations can capitalise on as well.

Research advises to women:

- View yourself as an agent for your organisations (it comes from the fact that women negotiate better for others than for themselves).

Research advises to companies:

- Invest in training and experience in negotiation (women tend to achieve more favourable economic outcomes the more time they spend at the bargaining table).
- Women need time to prepare for negotiation process and information about the bargaining range in a negotiation simulation.

EXAMPLE

Girls should accommodate and be concerned with the welfare of others.

Deeply ingrained societal gender roles lie at the root of the gender gap in negotiated outcomes. We expect already from the girls, to accommodate and be concerned with the welfare of others. On the other side there are societal expectations that boys and men should be more competitive, assertive and profit oriented. As a result, women may be uncomfortable when negotiating for higher salaries, for example.

GUIDELINES TO ADDRESS GENDER PAY GAP

- Include multiple women in shortlists for recruitment and promotions.
- Use skill-based assessment tasks in recruitment.
- Use structured interviews for recruitment and promotions.
- Encourage salary negotiation by showing salary ranges.
- Introduce transparency to promotion, pay and reward processes.
- Appoint diversity managers and/or diversity task forces.

NEGOTIATIONS IN THE AREA OF GENDER EQUALITY

'addressing gender issues in trade union/social negotiations'

DEFINITION

Gender bargaining means the implementation of gender issues in both trade union and social negotiations. This implies an awareness of the real and effective differences that exist between men and women.

GENDER NEGOTIATION IN PRACTICE

The valorisation of differences is the leitmotif of the discussion: gender negotiation becomes the theme through which to acknowledge the actual differences that exist in the world of work between men and women. The aim would be to appreciate them, in order to re-establish gender equality with agreements that favour all parties involved.

Gender equality rights in the process of negotiation is linked to strong arguments, with the need for equal numbers of men and women when negotiation process is being held and also in measuring the numbers of women and men in employment, education, career promotion, in reporting the gender pay gap and representation of women in higher management positions. Acquired rights are quickly forgotten, so we should all strive for constant fight, protection and care of the rights.

GENDER NEGOTIATION & GENDER EQUALITY

In every development initiative we aim to achieve, we should identify the gender equality results, concrete actions needed to achieve these results, and the indicators needed to measure progress. Without explicit objectives, strategies, targets, and actions to ensure women's equal participation and outcomes, the needs of women and girls continue to be overlooked. Identifying clear indicators to measure gender equality results is essential to measure and improve performance.

Those are essential steps for reducing poverty, advancing gender equality, and empowering women.

WOMEN'S STATEMENTS - SUMMARY

'Gender negotiation should be a tool to acknowledge the differences that in fact exist, and at the same time, become a resource to look for tools to enhance them and make them a strength.'

EXAMPLE

Demand for sex-disaggregated data

A good practice for better negotiation and consensus demands for sex-disaggregated data, which is the minimum standard for planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating all types of development initiatives. Disaggregating information by sex means that we count males and females separately when gathering information on development activities and benefits. Sex-disaggregated data is important because it helps assess whether an initiative is successful at targeting and benefiting women, men, girls, and boys as planned. Data on gender equality, for example transparent pay information, gives more power in negotiation and pushes negotiators to be more proactive throughout their negotiations.



HEALTH

- PREVENTION
- MEDICAL RESEARCH
- WELL-BEING
- ENVIRONMENT



ASSOCIATIONS

PREVENTION

mental health not monitored,
education, better than a cure, urgent,
determination, discernment, respect,
trust, concern for the future, health,
slow down, stress, Dora (public cancer
prevention programme in Slovenia),
suite, disease-preventing lifestyle,
money, time

MEDICAL RESEARCH

money, contribution to the development
of medicine, hospital, laboratory, health,
science, progress, ethics, trust, hope,
admiration, capital, accessibility, most
research done by men, also testing on
men (white, average age), between
washing, men mostly lead research
groups. Medical research seems to be
dominated by men and there is a
perception that women do not belong in
science. Women seem to be less
encouraged to choose science in
medicine as a career path. Sons are
more encouraged

WELL-BEING

spirit, creation, creation, access to,
peace of mind, calmness, orderliness,
health

ENVIRONMENT

silence, green, peace, harmony,
freshness, clean air, water, trees, work,
healthy, social responsibility, ecology,
we co-create, work environment,
home environment, country where we
live, affects our health, women are
more aware, clean air, green, natural,
mental health, physical health,
fulfilment

PREVENTION

'the right of individuals to access all preventive activities in the health protection system, preferably public and free of charge'

DEFINITION

Prevention is seen as an attitude of observing one's own body and caring, in order to avoid a future medical outcome, which could be worrying, if not irreparable.

It means the right of individuals to full accessibility to a preventive health protection system, possibly public and free of charge, which aims to reduce mortality rates through prompt intervention when necessary.

PREVENTION IN PRACTICE

In a life of stress, we often forget about ourselves, neglecting the aspect of care, health and prevention. It is necessary to raise awareness of this connection and to improve the national health service with careful policy plans that are not characterised by financial and personnel cuts.

'Prevention is better than cure' is one of the most recurrent thoughts, which however remains in most cases just a figure of speech: in fact, prevention is often not given the right weight, being seen as a nuisance or even as something to be feared because of what might be a medical judgement.

PREVENTION & GENDER EQUALITY

The word prevention first evokes the world of women. In fact, a healthy lifestyle is not enough, it is necessary for women, probably more than men, to take an interest in preventive care. Very often, however, the time to devote to prevention is lacking, as people put the well-being of others before their own, forgetting the importance it has in trying to prevent an illness from occurring.

MEDICAL RESEARCH

'recognition and inclusion of women in scientific research and trials and consequent strengthening of gender equality in the field of medicine and pharmacology'

DEFINITION

Recognition and inclusion of women in scientific research and experimentation and consequent strengthening of gender medicine and pharmacology, i.e., that branch of medicine that studies the influence of gender differences on a person's state of health or illness.

Medical research evokes positive words such as: commitment, dedication, sharing, growth, hope. Being a fundamental contribution to life, it should be valorised and carried out without conditioning and interests, focusing on new technologies and on the training of young people.

Medical research is fundamental to public health, which must be guaranteed for all citizens, since it gives hope of a cure to all people with diseases for which a cure has not yet been found. The aim of medical research must be to cure, but without disrupting the natural course of human life.

MEDICAL RESEARCH IN PRACTICE

Historically, medical studies have excluded female participants and research data have been collected from males and generalised to females. The gender gap in medical research results in real-life disadvantages for female patients. In a research which was conducted by Lea Merone (2022) observed that women wait longer than men for both a diagnosis, and pain relief, and are more likely to be misdiagnosed or discharged during serious medical events.

Medical research should also pay more attention to the internal dynamics of women. Indeed, one of the goals that medicine should set itself is to be able to find diversified treatments for men and women, so as to ensure equal access to equally effective therapies and pharmacological approaches for both genders.

PRESENT THEORIES AND PRACTICES

A variety of studies have shown that in many areas of healthcare women experience poorer outcomes. For example, in 2016, researchers at University College London found that women with dementia receive worse medical treatment than men with the condition. They found that women make fewer visits to the GP, receive less health monitoring, and take more potentially harmful medication. Another study found that in US emergency departments, women who are in acute pain are less likely to be given opioid painkillers than men. Women also had to wait longer to receive painkillers when they were prescribed. In addition, University of Rhode Island researcher, Karen L Calderone has found that women are half as likely to receive painkillers after surgery.



WELL-BEING

"provision of a public-private system (e.g. health services, jobs, schools, universities, associations, etc.) that promote achieve the best possible balance between the biological, psychological, social and economic spheres individual while ensuring better quality of life'

DEFINITION

Well-being is a guarantee of a public and private system that favours the pursuit of the best possible balance between the biological, psychological, social and economic spheres of the individual, guaranteeing a more satisfying quality of life.

WELL-BEING IN PRACTICE

Well-being can be achieved by taking care of our health, spending more time on our passions, resting and maintaining all those relationships with people that make us truly feel good.

We need to put a distance between ourselves and everything that brings negativity and makes us sad or brings us a state of anxiety. We need to be at peace with ourselves.

A person's physical and mental well-being is a fundamental component of being healthy.

However, we live in a society that requires us to be more and more high-performing, making it almost impossible to take a break and dedicate time to ourselves to be well.

WELL-BEING & GENDER EQUALITY

Women are always one step behind their own personal well-being, putting the well-being of others before their own. In fact, a woman's first thought is to make her children, parents, and partner feel good, and then lastly, if there is any time left, she will think about looking after her own well-being and taking care of herself. However, it is right to remember that if we are not well ourselves in the first place, we cannot even fully dedicate ourselves to the well-being of others.

PRESENT THEORIES AND PRACTICES

In a Women in the workplace study (2022) conducted by McKinsey & Company, they reported that:

- Only 40 % of women say their manager helps them manage their workload, and only 44 % say their manager regularly shows interest in their career.
- Less than half of companies provide training for managers on how to minimise employee burnout and make sure promotions are equitable.

ENVIRONMENT

"physical and virtual environment in which the individual operates and cooperates with others (working, social environment)'

DEFINITION

The environment can be defined as the totality of what is around us, but also as a complex of social, cultural and moral interactions in which a person is formed and grows, such as the work environment, and the associative and social environment.

ENVIRONMENT IN PRACTICE

The word environment, in the mind of most people, is associated with certain concepts that are not positive: ignorance, falsehood, lack of foresight, bad faith, etc. In other cases, however, it is directly linked to the climate emergency and pollution, recalling their effects.

In recent years, the topic of the environment has become relevant in many contexts: political, economic but also in terms of health: the health of the environment is important for those who live in it, but also for the survival of the environment itself, which could become inhospitable for future generations.

The lack of a healthy environment will lead to serious consequences in the coming years, and this creates a growing amount of concern in many people.

ENVIRONMENT & GENDER EQUALITY

The issue of an unhealthy environment leads to future parents, especially women, not wanting to have children due to the fear of bequeathing them an unhealthy ecosystem.

However, the environment is not only seen as the natural environment but also as the working and family environment, which need respect and care to be healthy.

Some solutions found would be to create an operational network on the subject of the environment and to reach the awareness that each one of us, in our own small way, can bring about great changes.

GUIDELINES FOR BETTER WOMEN'S HEALTH

A good employer tries to tailor their wellbeing initiatives to meet demands of specific employee groups, this includes a gender-based view of health, and considering the specific and unique health demands of each group. Many workplaces are not oriented to women, and their varying needs. A good employer includes women in decisions regarding:

- **Working environment:** designing appropriate toilet, arranging male-focused air-conditioning leaving female workers feeling the cold, designing or upgrading an office space, applying uniforms and dress codes.
- **Employee benefits:** When designing an employee benefits scheme, look at the wider lifestyle trends of your employees (infertility, menopause support, etc.) – consider specific women's health needs ...).
- **Culture:** create an accepting and open culture, promote 'storytelling' that can be a powerful way of increasing awareness of key issues, and helping to develop peer-to-peer empathy (on health topics: menstruation, pregnancy, infertility, pregnancy loss and menopause) Such conversations can foster acceptance and promote empathy.
- **Logistics:** Flexible working provides support to women that have multiple care responsibilities, ensure that employee benefits and well-being initiatives are rolled-out in an inclusive way (recording webinars and 24/7, etc.).



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"Women's equality is not just a women's issue; it's a human rights issue that requires all of us to unite, advocate, and stand together."

